R E P O R T R E S U M E S

ED 020 229 UD 005 659

ACCELERATION FOR THE OVERAGE POTENTIAL DROPOUT.

BY- CHAMBERLIN, GORDON L. CATTERALL, CALVIN D.

PUB DATE NOV 63

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.25 HC-$0.24 4P.

DESCRIPTORS- *EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAMS, *JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, *RETENTION STUDIES, *UNDERACHIEVERS, *STUDENT MOTIVATION, GRADE 7, GRADE 8, ACHIEVEMENT TESTS, GROUPING (INSTRUCTIONAL PURPOSES), COUNSELOR EVALUATION, HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, STUDENT ADJUSTMENT, DROPOUT PREVENTION, PREDICTION, DATA, AGE GRADE PLACEMENT, ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT, METROPOLITAN ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

A GROUP OF 25 OVERAGE UNDERACHIEVING PUPILS WHO HAD REPEATED A GRADE AT LEAST ONCE COMPLETED BOTH THE SEVENTH AND EIGHTH GRADE DURING AN EXPERIMENTAL 1 YEAR PROGRAM. RESULTS FROM THE METROPOLITAN ACHIEVEMENT TESTS (MAT) ADMINISTERED IN FEBRUARY AND JUNE OF THE EXPERIMENTAL YEAR REVEALED INCREASED MOTIVATION AND ACHIEVEMENT IN ALL BASIC SUBJECTS. HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELORS GAVE A "SATISFACTORY, GOOD, OR VERY GOOD" RATING TO 76 PERCENT OF THESE STUDENTS IN THEIR FRESHMAN YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL. SIXTY PERCENT RECEIVED THIS RATING IN THEIR JUNIOR YEAR. THREE STUDENTS EITHER FAILED OR DID POORLY IN THE NINTH GRADE. THESE THREE FAILURES MIGHT HAVE BEEN PREDICTED ON THE BASIS OF THE MAT SCORES. THE RESULTS INDICATED THAT A MOTIVATING CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT AND PLACEMENT WITH SIMILARLY OVERAGE PUPILS BENEFITED MOST STUDENTS IN THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP. SUCH A PROGRAM ALSO SAVED THE SCHOOL THE COST OF THESE YEARS OF SCHOOLING. THIS ARTICLE WAS PUBLISHED IN THE "PHI DELTA KAPPAN," VOLUME 45, NUMBER 2, NOVEMBER 1963. (LB)

ED020229

Officers of Phi Delta Kappa

A. G. CLARK, President, 316 Dalzell Ave., Pittsburgh 2, Pa.

GORDON I. SWANSON, First Vice-President, University Farm, University of Minnesota, St. Paul 1, Minn.

RUSSEL S. MERKEL, Second Vice-President, Indiana Central College, Indianapolis 27, Ind.

ARTHUR E. ARNESEN, Recording Secretary, 440 E. First South St., Salt Lake City, Utah.

CHESTER C. FRISBIE, Comptroller, Director of Teacher Education, Alaska Methodist University, Anchorage.

MAYNARD BEMIS, Executive Secretary, Eighth St. and Union Ave., Bloomington, Ind.

Editorial Consultants

WILLIAM J. ELLENA, Associate Secretary, American Association of School Administrators, 1201 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington 6, D. C.

CHARLES R. FOSTER, Assistant Dean, College of Education, University of Florida, Gainesville.

ROY M. HALL, Dean, School of Education, University of Delaware, Newark.

GEORGE E. MATHES, Principal, Morey Junior High School, Denver 18, Colo.

WENDELL H. PIERCE, Superintendent, Public Schools, Cincinnati 6, O.

JOHN R. ROWE, Educational Consultant, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 425 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 11, Ill.

HAROLD G. SHANE, Dean, School of Education, Indiana University, Bloomington.

PAUL STREET, Director, Bureau of School Service, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

J. LLOYD TRUMP, Associate Secretary, National Association of Secondary-School Principals, NEA, 1201 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington 6, D. C.

Editorial and Business Staff

STANLEY ELAM, Editor; DONALD W. ROBINSON, Associate Editor; JULES HARCOURT, Business Manager; MAURICE F. SHADLEY, Director of Special Services. Address staff members at Eighth St. and Union Ave., Bloomington, Ind.

Photo-offset reprints of articles appearing in the PHI DELTA KAPPAN may be obtained from the Business Manager. 1-2 pages $5 per 100; 3-4 $8; 5-6 $15; 7-8 $20. Minimum order 100. On larger orders, write for price schedule.

UD 005 659

PHI DELTA KAPPAN

JOURNAL OF PHI DELTA KAPPA, PROFESSIONAL FRATERNITY FOR MEN IN EDUCATION

The PHI DELTA KAPPAN *solicits and publishes articles designed to advance thinking in the fields of educational research, service, and leadership. The point of view expressed in an article may support or oppose positions taken by Phi Delta Kappa as an organization.*

In this November 1963 issue

	Page
Editorial, *Laying Out New Routes to Adulthood*	69
Issues in Educating the Culturally Disadvantaged, *Bernard A. Kaplan* DUP .0016.3	70
Dissatisfactions in Teaching the CD Child, *Patrick J. Groff*	76 056
Our Demoralizing Slum Schools, *Clemmont E. Vontress*	77 05
The Teacher, the Middle Class, the Lower Class, *Samuel Tenenbaum*	82
Alienated Youth Here and Abroad, *William C. Kvaraceus*	87 05
Educating Culturally Deprived Youth in Urban Centers, *Frederick Shaw* DUP .0194.7	91
Acceleration for the Overage Potential Dropout?, *Gordon L. Chamberlin* with *Calvin D. Catterall*	98 05
A Second Look at "The Emerging High School Curriculum," *Harold Spears*	101
"Schools for the Sixties"	107
Scraps from a Teacher's Notebook, *Don Robinson*	110
Keeping Abreast in Research, *William G. Land*, Guest Editor	111
Books for Leaders	
NEW DIMENSIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS, Stanley Elam, editor. Reviewed by *John H. Fischer*	113
THE COMING WORLD TRANSFORMATION, Ferdinand Lundberg. Reviewed by *Morris R. Lewenstein*	115
TEEN-AGE TYRANNY, Fred and Grace Hechinger. Reviewed by *Joseph M. Cronin*	115
ANTI-INTELLECTUALISM IN AMERICAN LIFE, Richard Hofstadter. Reviewed by *Raymond H. Muessig*	116
Keeping Abreast in Education	118
S-R Bonds	120
It Can't Happen Here?, *A. J. Fiorino*	Inside Back Cover

VOLUME XLV • NUMBER 2 • Copyright 1963, by Phi Delta Kappa, Inc.

Entered as second-class matter at the post office at Spencer, Indiana, under the Act of August 24, 1912. ☆ Published monthly, October through June, by Phi Delta Kappa, Inc., at Spencer, Indiana. Acceptance for mailing at a special rate of postage is provided for in the Act of February 28, 1925. ☆ Subscription rate, $4.00 per year. Single copies, while available, 50 cents each, from the Bloomington Office. ☆ Listed in *Education Index*, published by the H. W. Wilson Company, New York, N. Y. Available on microfilm through University Microfilm, Inc., Ann Arbor, Mich. ☆ EDITORIAL OFFICE: Phi Delta Kappa, Eighth St. and Union Ave., Bloomington, Indiana. ☆ Member, Educational Press Association of America.

Address all communications, purchase orders, and address changes to the Business Manager, PHI DELTA KAPPAN, Eighth St. and Union Ave., Bloomington, Indiana. Postmaster: Send Form 3579 to PHI DELTA KAPPAN, Eighth St. and Union Ave., Bloomington, Indiana.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY Phi Delta Kappa, Inc.

TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

Acceleration for the Overage Potential Dropout?

By GORDON L. CHAMBERLIN, with CALVIN D. CATTERALL

AMERICA's schools use an effective system for retaining youngsters who need grade repetition. But, regardless of need, there is usually no chance to make up that lost time. Years after he has been retained in a grade, a discouraged 17- or 18-year-old high-school sophomore is likely to slip into the ranks of the dropouts.

Here's the story of an action research project aimed partly at preventing dropouts *through acceleration* at the seventh grade level. The promising results suggest another look at the case for some students of normal ability (not just the gifted) skipping a grade.

Greenfield Junior High School in the school year of 1959-1960 was new and staffed with earnest, open-minded professionals. Its more than 800 seventh and eighth grade students flowed from the growing rows of tract homes in the El Cajon Valley, California. Most of the parents commuted the few freeway miles to shrinking aircraft factories, booming missile and electronics plants, or military installations around San Diego.

Each new September, Greenfield's staff expected a sprinkling of overage seventh graders—mostly boys we *thought* of as "dull" and "tough."

What we found in the records of the oldest twenty-one boys and thirteen girls in the seventh grade shattered our self-fulfilling hypothesis. Their IQ's averaged 96, only a few points below the entire school. Since these "big ones" were a year and a half older than the rest of the seventh graders, their mental age was above Greenfield's mean in this grade. But in achievement test scores, the overage group lagged more than a year behind the rest of the seventh grade.

Was this underachievement related to the difference in age between the overage group and their peers?

Thirty-three of the thirty-four older children had repeated a grade at least once. The boys and girls displayed a common pattern. One after another squirmed, fidgeted, and rationalized when the subject came up: "Why are you older than most seventh-graders?" Many blurted their feelings of being "not as smart as the others." They shored up weak self-images by denying the value of schools, by behavior patterns we felt were overly aggressive or overly withdrawn. Illness caused the retention of eleven children; time lost from school because of frequent moving was blamed in nearly half the cases. Their families were usually less well-off and more mobile, with breadwinners in unskilled or semi-skilled work.

We went to the children themselves, and they told knowingly or at times unwittingly of their low self-esteem and marginal school adjustment.

Could these boys and girls, 14 years old or more at the end of the seventh grade, hope to stick it out through the five years needed to finish high school?

Could these children jack up their lagging achievement levels?

Would these "big ones" find a better school adjustment in a peer group their own age?

Could we help these youngsters? And, incidentally, could we help them while saving a substantial sum badly needed in other educational areas?

Late in January of 1960, with deliberate drama, we dropped our bombshell in an announcement to this group:

> Years ago, you LOST a year of your lives. We school people kept you in one grade for two years. For various reasons it was best for you at that time.
>
> Now, the school wants to give you a chance to EARN back that year. Would you work as hard as you could, if it meant going to high school next September?
>
> Their answer was a jubilant "Yes!"

For them, the conditions were simple. Each volunteer had to get parental consent, work up to his ability, and be a satisfactory citizen.

For us, the larger problem loomed—to induce *esprit de corps,* a motivating atmosphere that would tear away inhibitions, that would set these kids free to pursue the goal they said they wanted so much.

We devised an environment for a "Hawthorne effect"[1] with separate grouping and frequent visits

MR. CHAMBERLIN *(Delta 2331) was formerly vice-principal of Greenfield Junior High, El Cajon, Calif., and is now coordinator of business services in the Cupertino School District near San Jose.* MR. CATTERALL *(Alpha Omicron 813) is a psychologist in the Cupertino School District.*

UD 005 659

of observers. Early in February, all thirty-four youngsters transferred to the "experimental group, Core 87." Greenfield's other pupils were grouped by a grade number and a letter, such as 8B or 7E. The number 87 stood for the "guinea pigs" who were trying to cover both the seventh and eighth grades at once. Ronald Dunham, their new core teacher and counselor, drummed out the message day by day to make these "big ones" feel there was something special, something dramatic about their group. Word flew over the peer grapevine that Core 87 was part of a scientific experiment. Daily, visiting firemen—the principal (Norman Esser), the authors, various teachers, and any available district office visitors—dropped into the class.

In succeeding months the original thirty-four children shrank to twenty-five. Two moved away. Two asked to return to their old classes because they "couldn't do the work." Five others were dropped for failure either to work or to behave.

The curriculum generally followed the eighth grade pattern. All possible materials were gathered for individualizing work into a personal contract basis, reminiscent of the Frederic Burk method.[2]

Core 87 youngsters submitted to a complete battery of the Metropolitan Achievement Test in February as a pre-test. They were post-tested in June with another form. These achievement tests measured a part of the increased motivation we had induced. The results are given as Table I.

Table I. A Comparison of Scores on Metropolitan Achievement Tests Administered .4 Years Apart

Sub-test	*Form R Feb. 17, 1960 Group Median (Grade Equiv.)*	*Form S June 9, 1960 Group Median (Grade Equiv.)*	*Median Growth in Years*	*Percentage of Expected Growth*
Reading	6.4	7.1	.7	175
Vocabulary	7.0	8.5	1.5	375
Arithmetic Fundamentals	7.0	7.6	.6	150
Arithmetic Problems	6.3	6.8	.5	125
English	6.1	6.8	.5	175
Literature	7.4	8.5	.7	225
History	6.8	8.9	2.1	525
Geography	7.3	7.7	.4	100 (at norm)
Science	8.8	9.2	.4	100 (at norm)
Spelling	6.1	7.0	.9	225

In writing assignments about "What happened to you in Core 87?," the children revealed an improved attitude toward school.

But what happened to them in high school?

High-school counselors evaluated them in comparison with other students of the same grade and ability in the spring of their freshman year and again in the autumn of their junior year. Table II shows the raw results of the study.

Table II. High School Counselors' Evaluations of Core 87

	March, 1961 Freshman Year	*Nov., 1962 Junior Year*
No response	3	5
Poor adjustment	3	3
Poor adjustment and dropped out	0	1
Satisfactory adjustment and dropped out	0	1
Satisfactory, good, or very good	19	15
	25	25

Of the twenty students still traceable two and one-half years after leaving Greenfield, eighteen were still in school. Two girls had dropped out. This dropout rate of ten per cent was only slightly higher than is typical in these high schools.

We studied the five students who had failed, dropped out, or done poorly. Could this have been predicted? Yes. In the clarity of hindsight, our data revealed an answer, at least as it applied to success in the freshman year. Three students had failed or done poorly in the ninth grade. The Metropolitan Achievement Test scores for these three unsuccessful pupils were unique in two characteristics: 1) each had pre-tested more than a year below his actual grade placement (but so did several others), and 2) each had post-tested less than the norm-group progress from the beginning point. In short, these three were alone in starting with low achievement and in showing no measurable extra surge attributable to increased motivation. If we had known, the three could have remained at Greenfield another year. All the students who succeeded in the ninth grade either responded with extraordinary growth in achievement, started with above average achievement, or both. We found no predictive pattern for tenth grade performance.

Certain implications are unavoidable. The overage students who received *and responded to* the encouraging attention and the chance to gain acceleration did as well or better than typical high-school students.

This supports the notion that achievement and

[1] See George Caspar Homans, "Group Factors in Worker Productivity," in *Readings in Social Psychology*, Theodore M. Newcomb and Eugene L. Hartley, editors. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1947. pp. 448-52.

[2] Lawrence A. Cremin, *The Transformation of the School*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961. pp. 295-96.

adjustment to school are likely to improve if youngsters are placed in a group of their own age level. Secondly, by comparison with a better-achieving norm group, overage underachieving pupils can clearly sprint ahead under the effect of a contrived motivating environment. Last, skipping a year's schooling seemed to have a beneficial effect upon at least a major portion of the group (seventeen). As a by-product, the cost of these years of schooling was saved for other educational uses.

A broader study, including a control group, would produce facts to confirm or deny the inferences drawn here. It ought to be made to answer the question: Should older elementary students be screened for acceleration to increase their chances of completing high school successfully?

How many thousands of youngsters are a year and a half older than their peers in America's elementary and junior high schools? If accelerating the *right* ones will help these children, will reduce the high-school dropout rate, and will save money, shouldn't we bend every effort to the task?

Tax Deductions for Teacher Travel

► A teacher of foreign languages may deduct European travel expenses on his income tax return, a federal judge has ruled. The *New York Times* reported the ruling on October 10, 1963, citing the judge as follows:

"The teacher of foreign languages may well be in a unique situation. It is not necessary to visit Europe in order to maintain or improve many other 'skills,' but it is certainly necessary in the case of a teacher of European languages.

"It is not without significance that the Congress has recognized that a wide speaking knowledge of modern foreign languages is essential to the national welfare and defense.

"This kind of visit to foreign countries would seem to be necessary even where the teacher was born in a foreign country whose language he teaches. Where, as here, the language teacher has been born in the United States and educated here it is all the more necessary for him from time to time to hear the language spoken in its own country.

"No living language remains static; the fact that it is living means that it constantly changes."

The Modern Language Association of America reports that 26 per cent of its members, or about 1000, typically go abroad in a single year.

► Three top-ranked teachers who retired last year have been engaged by the Salt Lake City Board of Education to serve as part-time troubleshooters, assigned to assisting beginning teachers who encounter difficulties. They will work two or three days a week, as required.

'Shared-Time' Working in Detroit

► The largest "shared-time" program in the nation is operating this fall in the Detroit area. The 182 seventh and eighth graders at St. Norbert's parish school attend Cherry Hill Junior-Senior High School half of each day for mathematics, science, art, music, shop, and homemaking courses. They take language arts and religion at the parish school. The pastor of St. Norbert's reported his school would have needed four new teachers and two additional classrooms this year except for the shared-time program. Administrators of both systems say the program is working smoothly.

► The parents of 616 Utah school dropouts were polled on their reaction. Parents of only 269 were opposed to their children dropping out of school; 167 were moderately opposed and 102 definitely opposed.

► Administrators generally want to expand the use of audio-visual materials and try new media, accoring to a U.S. Office of Education survey, while teachers are generally satisfied with the present arrangements.

► Ten colleges in the New York City area are planning a television network to share course offerings in areas of limited enrollment and in subjects where one institution has developed a highly specialized program.

Innovations in New York City Schools

► Innovations in the New York City schools this year include large-scale expansion of team-teaching, lengthening the school day for first-graders from four hours to five hours, and teaching math and science in Spanish to 3,000 Spanish-speaking pupils. Programed textbooks have been introduced in a pilot project for twenty-seven fifth-grade spelling classes and in forty-seven junior high school classes for slow readers. In high school the laboratory work in chemistry and physics has been increased from five to six periods a week, and work-study programs have been expanded.

► A Pasadena teacher was recently suspended from his classroom and reassigned to home tutoring because he refused to remove his beard.